London and Westminster Innkeepers and Stablekeepers 104

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TO THE

Honourable the COMMONS of Great-Britain in Parliament assembled.

THE

CASE

OF THE

Several Inn-keepers, Stable-keepers, and other Consumers of Hay and Oats, within the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark, and other Places within the Weekly Bills of Mortality.

SHEWETH,

THAT the price of hay hath of late years been at a very enormous rate, which they conceive to be owing to the practice of the salesmen thereof.

That the salesmen (being few in number) have it in their power to controul the markets, and fix such prices on it, from day to day, as they think fit.

That

That they have great reaſon to believe, that it is a common practice with them, at certain times, to ſtop the carriages coming to market with hay.

That the ſaleſmen frequently purchaſe hay of the farmers to ſell again on their own account, which is directly contrary to law, but againſt which the conſumers can have no redreſs, unleſs it was poſſible to produce a witneſs to ſuch bargain, and unleſs too they could attend the ſaid hay night and day, till it was brought to market, and ſo be able to ſwear to the identity thereof.

That the ſaleſmen, when the hay comes to market, do at times enter falſe prices in the regiſter book kept in the hay-market for the ſatisfaction of the farmers, and embezzle ſums of money to their own uſe, as can be proved to this Honourable Houſe; and therefore pray, that the hay ſaleſmen may be utterly aboliſhed;—humbly conceiving, that the farmer may, with as little inconvenience, ſell his own hay as his own ſtraw, which laſt he now does, either in perſon, or by his domeſtick ſervant, who brings it to market.

The ſaid conſumers further beg leave to repreſent to this Honourable Houſe, that there are great abuſes committed in the article of meaſures, by which oats are ſold in the different parts of this kingdom, every man now ſelling by meaſures according to his own pleaſure: and hope this Honourable Houſe will be pleaſed to take under their conſideration the proper means of fixing a certain ſtandard for buying and ſelling throughout the kingdom, and that no meaſures, unſealed, be allowed to be uſed in any inn, livery-ſtable, &c. within this kingdom. And they further repreſent, that they can make it appear, that the high prices of oats have not been ſo much owing to any real ſcarcity of that grain, as to the mal practices of jobbers and factors, who, being

now

now turned merchants, buy up large quantities, and bring them to market at advanced prices, by which the farmers are no ways benefitted, and the consumers greatly injured.

Signed by order of a general meeting, held the 29th of December, 1766.

ROBERT HOLDER,

Clerk of the Company of Innholders, London.

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Inn-keepers, Stable-keepers, and other Conſumers of Hay and Oats, within the Cities of London and Weſtminſter, Borough of Southwark, and other Places within the Weekly Bills of Mortality,